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A SCHOLAR

You sit, chanting the maxims of Confucius.
On your head is a domed cap of black satin, and your supple hands with their long nails are piously folded.
You rock to and fro rhythmically.
Your voice, rising and falling in clear nasal monosyllables, flows on steadily, monotonously, like the flowing of water and the flowering of thought.
You are chanting, it seems, of the pious conduct of man in all ages;
And I know you for a scoundrel.

None the less the maxims of Confucius are venerable, and your voice pleasant.
I listen attentively.

CHINESE NEW YEAR

Mrs. Sung has a new kitchen-god.
The old one—he who has presided over the household this twelvemonth—has returned to the Celestial Regions to make his report.
Before she burned him Mrs. Sung smeared his mouth with sugar; so that doubtless the report will be favorable.
Now she has a new god.
As she paid ten coppers for him, he is handsomely painted and should be highly efficacious.
So there is rejoicing in the house of Mrs. Sung.